

Final Report to Department of Environment and Conservation

Project: City of Ryde 'CARE for the air' Pilot Environmental Compliance and Education Project (Automotive Businesses)

Report by: Sam Cappelli, Manager The Environment

Date: 1 July 2004

Introduction

This final report provides information about how the City of Ryde completed the project titled City of Ryde 'CARE for the air' Pilot Environmental Compliance and Education Project (Automotive Businesses)

The NSW Government Clean Air Fund assisted the program. The program was funded 50% by the NSW Government under its Local Air Improvement Program and 50% by the City of Ryde.

In selecting this project, The City of Ryde had identified this industry group as the source of many complaints in the past and considered that there were significant environmental benefits in delivering 'face to face' environmental education to this group, specifically targeting on air pollution to supplement the abundance of material already available on Stormwater and Waste Management.

Brief Outline of Program

Outline

This project was completed in June 2004 and targeted the abundance of automotive businesses in the Gladesville area of the City of Ryde

The project primarily involved conducting compliance audits and raising environmental awareness of the target group on air, water, noise and waste related activities.

The study area selected for the program was that locality bounded by Victoria, Monash, Higginbotham and Cressy Roads Gladesville and contained 27 automotive businesses.

Aim

1. To raise the level of environmental awareness of owners and operators of automotive businesses in the Gladesville Industrial / Commercial area (the study area) on stormwater, air, noise and waste pollution issues.

Objectives

1. To educate and encourage owners and operators of 27 automotive businesses in the study area to reduce the use and release of polluting substances to the local environment, by the end of the program.
2. To develop and distribute an industry specific fact sheet on air pollution that can be used by automotive businesses to assist them in meeting their environmental responsibilities The fact sheet / s would include information on:
 - Handling and storage of materials in particular chemicals, solvents etc to reduce potential air pollution.
 - Air emissions from spray booths and related control and maintenance requirements.
 - Proper disposal of used solvents and the potential harm caused from allowing solvents to evaporate into the atmosphere.

Project Manager Details

Project Manager:

Mr Sam Cappelli
Manager, The Environment
City of Ryde
Ph 99528263
Email scappelli@ryde.nsw.gov.au

Alternate:

Mr Craig Redfern
Team Leader, Environmental Health
City of Ryde
Ph 99528273
Email credfern@ryde.nsw.gov.au

Methodology

1. Identification of target premises and contact details	-Database prepared
2. Research of target industry	-Completed
3. Determine target groups	-Primary Owners and operators of automotive industries in the study area - Secondary Industry Groups Auto Parts Recyclers Association of Australia Motor Traders Association Motor Vehicle Repair Industry Council Residents in the study area Local media Staff – indoor and outdoor Councillors
4. Approach industry groups about the program	-Letters sent
5. Develop Checklists / Protocols	-Prepared
6. Develop Media Campaign	-Prepared
7. Develop Campaign slogan and logo – visual identity	-CoR Staff Competition
8. Research available educational material	-Completed
9. Design Awards Program	-Completed
10. Deliver letters & questionnaires to businesses	-Hand delivered
11. Send letters to business industry groups	-Posted
12. Send letters to residents living in the study area	-Posted
13. Conduct first round compliance inspections	-Conducted by 5 Environmental Health Officers (EHO's)
14. Send schedule of work letters	-Posted
15. Develop Educational Material – air pollution specific	-3 fact sheets/1 poster
16. Do second follow up Compliance Inspections	-Using same 5 EHO's
17. Deliver Educational material and white board gift with campaign slogan and logo during audit inspections	-Educational Material explained by EHO's face to face.
18. Deliver Awards Programs	-Select 'Best Performed' and 'Most Improved'
19. Evaluate program and complete final report	-Completed

Key Outcomes

- 1 Delivered 'face to face' environmental compliance inspections to 27 automotive businesses focusing on typical polluting practices.
- 2 Produced specific educative material on air pollution to supplement the abundance of material already available on stormwater and waste management.
- 3 Developed a campaign slogan and logo in addition to the DEC's 'It's a Living Thing' logo to create a visual identity and to give the program recognition. Also delivered a high quality 900mmx600mm magnetic whiteboard incorporating the slogan and logo's to consolidate the campaign message beyond the life of the project.
- 4 Developed Generic Checklists / Protocols that are transportable to other similar audit programs
- 5 Over 93% of businesses audited complied substantially with all of audit items identified from the inspections (39% fully, 54% substantially)
- 6 Promotional Collateral and Gifts namely 3 fact sheets, 1 do's and don'ts poster cover sheet and whiteboard containing the campaign message given as a gift. Also distributed 'Best Practice Guidelines for the Auto Service Industry'. All material was explained to the business owners/operators 'face to face' by the EHO's upon delivery during the second round of inspections.
- 7 'Best Performed' and 'Most Improved' businesses were rewarded with a laminated Certificate of Merit and a 10" x 8" engraved plaque each. Awards were presented at the winners premises by the Mayor, Cr Terry Perram and Manager, The Environment, Sam Cappelli. All other businesses who participated in the project were each sent a laminated Certificate Of Participation and covering letter of appreciation by mail.

Key Audit Findings

Handling, Storing and Disposal of Solvents, Fuels and Oils

This area of the business was not particularly well understood at the commencement of the program.

Whilst storage occurred mostly indoors, the manner of storage was often found to be unorganised, fragmented with few providing adequate containment measures. The inadequate labelling of containers was also found at many of the businesses and there were instances where used solvents were being allowed to evaporate to atmosphere to avoid disposal costs.

Nearly all of the businesses required some improvement in the areas of proper solvent disposal, bunding, keeping of relevant material safety data sheets (MSDS's), provision of spill response procedures and materials at selected locations. The matter of adequate solid and liquid waste disposal practices was however generally found not to be a significant problem.

The first round of inspections focussed on these areas and by the time of the second inspection, many of the businesses had centralised their storage provisions and provided adequate containment measures.

A fact sheet was prepared and delivered to the businesses to reinforce best management storage practices and was particularly well received.

Handling of Air Conditioning Systems

Only 3 of the businesses inspected involved work on vehicle air conditioning systems. Of these, 2 had licenses from the Motor Vehicle Repair Industry to carry out vehicle A/C repairs and degassing procedures and the other contracted the work out to a licensed person to complete.

The remaining businesses were not very aware of the dangers with refrigerant gases despite many operators admitting to having to remove systems from wrecked vehicles. When asked about this practice, many said that they do sometimes have to take systems out but that they had already been degassed before arrival at the site and that they were simply disposing of the systems.

A fact sheet was prepared and delivered to each of the businesses on this issue and highlighting best management practices and importance of ensuring that all motor vehicle A/C service technicians were trained and certified by an accredited training program in the proper use of refrigerant recovery/recycling equipment.

The fact sheet was particularly well received by the business operators.

Operation of Spray Booths

Eight of the businesses had fully operational spray booths complying substantially with AS/NZS 4114.1 & 4114.2 – 2003 – Design Requirements for Spray Booths and Exhaust Stacks.

Approximately half of these booths did require some attention to filtration such as the regular cleaning and or replacement of filter fabric and the repairing of holes in the filters to increase the operating efficiency of the booths and reduce air pollution from the stacks.

By the return inspection, those businesses with problems at the initial inspection had filters that had been replaced/fitted correctly and were able to demonstrate an adequate cleaning maintenance schedule for the filters

Business operators were able to identify with the following benefits:

For Painters – a well-ventilated and maintained spray booth will effectively remove paint over-spray from the air

For the Environment – filters that are regularly cleaned and or changed will reduce air pollution

For Businesses – the controlled flow of dust free air will improve job quality

A fact sheet was prepared on spray booths and delivered to the operators during the return inspection and targeted construction, maintenance and filtration to assist operators in their use of the booths and highlighted best management practices.

This fact sheet was well received by the operators.

Evaluation: Actual Project V Grant Application

The project has proceeded substantially in accordance with the original grant proposal, with the following exceptions:

1. Project duration was extended to the middle of June 2004, with DEC Grant Administrating Officers approval
2. Awards Ceremony was substituted with presentation of the 2 award winners at there respective business addresses by the Mayor of the City of Ryde and the Manager, The Environment, also with DEC Grant Administration Officers approval.

All other businesses were sent their certificates of participation via the mail.

3. The telephone survey was substituted with interviews by the EHO's during the second round of inspections.

When asked the following 3 questions, all responses indicated that the program was completely understood and very well received by the business operators without any negative feedback about program delivery.

Q1: Did you understand the Program?

Q2: Did you like how the Program was delivered by City of Ryde?

Q3: How could have the program been improved?

Difficulties and Delays

1. Christmas and holiday period delayed the project. This led to a forced extension of the project.
2. Council was unable to get at least 80% of business operators to a formal Awards Ceremony. This led to a revised presentation procedure.

Lessons Learnt

Owners and operators of the businesses seemed to relax during the second stage of the project and opened good communication lines once it was made clear that this was an education program and that the inspections were being carried out in a non-threatening manner for their own benefit to minimise environmental risk.

The owners and operators were positive in their approach to the program and this was largely due to the non-threatening manner of program delivery.

Nevertheless, they all understood that there is still a place for regulatory enforcement but that this was not a driving force to wanting to do the right thing.

Operators were particularly keen to ensure that they were treated fairly and consistently with their competitors and many were prepared to do the 'right thing' if others were made to do the same.

The good compliance rate with over 93% of businesses doing a substantial amount of the scheduled work reflects a high acceptance by the business owners and operators to the way the project was delivered.

Whilst regulatory action is available, the good compliance rate resulting from the approach taken in this project cannot be ignored and is more likely to promote positive changes in behaviour.

Timeliness of the Project

The project was delivered substantially on time with the exception that the final report was unavoidably 2 weeks late.

Successes and Failures

Successes

Two rounds of inspections were completed of 27 automotive businesses and by the second round of audits, the owners and operators were fully open and very cooperative to the program.

The business owners and operators were very appreciative of the educational material prepared specifically for the target industry.

Most of the business owners and operators showed a reasonable level of environmental awareness. A good open line of communication between Council officers undertaking the program and the businesses was fostered and Council will look to developing this further into future programs.

Failures

Nil

Statement about Future Work or Follow up

Project Target Group

EHO's will follow up the 7% of businesses that failed to achieve compliance with any part of the schedule of work.

Other Groups

The City of Ryde will duplicate this project on automotive businesses in West Ryde and Meadowbank during 2004/05 using the checklists, protocols and educative material developed from this project.

City of Ryde Commitment to this Project

The total cost for this project was \$25,212 funded 50% by the NSW Government and 50% by the City of Ryde.

The project was incorporated into the City Management Plan 2003-06 and the checklists, protocols and educative material developed as part of this project will be used to develop templates for the delivery of similar programs in other areas and for other target groups.

The project will become the foundation for future industry compliance audits and will complement future local air quality and other environmental protection management initiatives intended for the City of Ryde.

The City of Ryde is also in the process of developing a local air quality management plan and the establishment of an industry audit program has been incorporated in the first draft.

Advertising and Media

The following stages of the campaign were targeted by the advertising and media campaign:

- Commencement of campaign
- Midway point of campaign
- Conclusion of campaign
- Announcement of award (s) winner (s).

The following stages of the campaign were targeted by newspapers and media releases:

- Commencement of campaign
- Several mayor columns in local papers at various stages of the project
- Several media releases on City Website
- Announcement of award (s) winner (s)

Dissemination of Material

All material prepared as part of this project has been included in the Annexures section of this report.

In addition, the material is also being made available on the City Website www.ryde.nsw.gov.au

The Final report will also be made available to the Local Government Association and all Regions of Councils, particularly the Northern Sydney Region of Councils (NSROC).

Annexures

1. Excel spreadsheet of target properties
2. Sample letters sent to businesses, industry groups and residents
3. Checklists and protocols developed for the program
4. Final Income/ Expenditure Statement form completed – hard copy only
5. Automotive Industry Fact Sheets – Do's and Don'ts Poster / Cover
6. Automotive Fact Sheet 1 – Refrigerant Gases
7. Automotive Fact Sheet 2 – Spray Booths
8. Automotive Fact Sheet 3– Storing and Using Solvents
9. Template – Certificate of Participation.
10. Template – Certificate of Merit (Best Performed)
11. Template – Certificate of Participation (Most Improved)
12. Template – Standard Schedule of Work letter sent
13. Template – Campaign Slogan and Logo
14. Various City of Ryde Media Releases – mostly hard copies only.
15. Various photographs

Sam Cappelli
Manager The Environment